Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of digital images including at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program embodied in a computer media, said program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts wherein any one of said plurality of images is located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts is capable of being printed;

providing at least one ~~image placeholder into~~predefined location in each of the plurality of different page layouts, said at least one ~~image placeholder being void of~~predefined location defining an area in which none of said plurality of images may be placed, wherein each of said page layouts having white space between said at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location and said plurality of images;

analyzing each of said different page layouts and spatially balancing said white space between said plurality of digital images and said at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location in accordance with the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts; and

selecting the page layout based on the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images.

2. Cancelled.

3. Cancelled.

4 (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein said analyzing said different page layouts comprises scoring each of said different page layouts.

5.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of further scaling the plurality of digital images of said selected page layout by different amounts.

6.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the amount of white space is minimized by using stochastic algorithms.

7.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein said grouping of said plurality of digital images includes placing said plurality of digital images in said different page layouts in a non-overlapping pattern.

8.   Cancelled.

9.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 4 wherein said analyzing of said different page layouts comprises an iteration of comparing sequentially two different page layouts and selecting the best page layout until no further improvement in scoring is obtained.

10.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 9 further comprising the step of scaling individual images of the page layout obtained after said iteration.

11.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 9 further comprising the step of rotating said plurality of digital images a predetermined amount.

12.   Cancelled.

13.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of positioning said plurality of digital images in said selected page layout so as to provide a desired border on said page.

14.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein said white space is determined vertically between adjacent images in said page layouts.

15   (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein said white space is determined horizontally between adjacent images in said page layouts.

16.   (currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of digital images in a predetermined page format including a background image utilizing a software program embodied in a computer media, said program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

identifying an image to be used as a background image;

grouping said plurality of digital images into a plurality of different page layouts including said background image wherein any one of said plurality of <u>digital</u> images is located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts is capable of being printed;

providing at least one ~~image placeholder~~<u>predefined location in said background</u> in the plurality of different page layouts, said at least one ~~image placeholder~~ <u>predefined location</u> ~~being void of said~~ <u>defining an area in which none</u> <u>of</u> plurality of <u>digital</u> images <u>may be placed</u>~~including said background image~~, wherein each of said page layouts having white space between said at least one ~~image placeholder~~<u>predefined location</u> and said plurality of <u>digital</u> images;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of said white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balancing said white space between said plurality of digital images; and

selecting the page layout based on said amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images.

17.   (previously presented) The method according to Claim 16 wherein said background image is displayed with at least one reduced characteristic.

18. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 17 wherein said at least one reduced characteristic is color saturation.

19. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 17 further including the step of:

identifying at least one image to be placed at a predetermined image location.

20. Cancelled.

21. Cancelled.

22. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 further comprising placing said plurality of digital images in said selected page layout.

23. Cancelled.

24. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 wherein said analyzing said different page layouts comprises scoring each of said different page layouts.

25. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of further scaling the images of said selected page layout by different amounts.

26. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 wherein the amount of said space is minimized by using stochastic algorithms.

27. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 wherein said grouping of said plurality of digital images in said different page layouts is done in a non-overlapping pattern.

28.   Cancelled.

29.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 16 wherein said analyzing of said different page layouts comprises an iteration of comparing sequentially two different page layouts and selecting the best page layout until no further improvement in scoring is obtained.

30.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 29 further comprising the step of scaling individual digital images of the page layout obtained after said iteration.

31.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 29 further comprising the step of rotating said digital images a predetermined amount.

32.   Cancelled.

33.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of positioning said digital images in said selected page layout so as to provide a desired border on said page.

34.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 16 wherein said white space is determined vertically between adjacent digital images in said page layouts.

35.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 16 wherein said white space is determined horizontally between adjacent digital images in said page layouts.

36.   (currently amended) A computer software product for organizing a plurality of images in a predetermined format comprising a computer readable storage medium having a computer program wherein any one of said plurality of images is located in any position in said plurality of different page

layouts which when loaded into a computer causes the computer to perform the following steps:

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts is capable of being printed;

providing at least one predetermined area into the plurality of different page layouts, said at least one predetermined area ~~being void~~defending an area into which none of said plurality of images may be placed, wherein each of said page layouts having white space between said at least one predetermined area and said plurality of images;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of said white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area; and

selecting the page layout based on said amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area.

37.   (currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of images in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of digital images;

providing at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location defining an area in which none of being ~~void of~~ said plurality of digital images may be placed;

selecting a number of said images and said at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location for placement on said predetermined page format;

grouping said plurality of images and said ~~image placeholder~~at least one predefined location ~~being void of said plurality of digital images~~into a plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts is capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of digital images and said at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location wherein any one of said plurality of images is located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts;

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analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts; and

selecting the page layout based on the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of page layouts.

38.   (currently amended) A method of organizing a first set of plurality of images and an ~~image placeholder~~predefined location defining an area in which none of the plurality images may be placed in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

grouping said plurality of images and said ~~image placeholder~~predefined location ~~being void of said plurality of digital images~~ into a plurality of different page layouts, wherein each of said page layouts having white space between said at least one ~~image placeholder~~predefined location and said plurality of images and wherein any one of said plurality of images is located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts is capable of being printed;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and ~~image placeholder~~predefined location;

selecting the page layout based on ~~said~~ the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and

storing said selected page layout for later use.

39.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 38 wherein said stored page layout is used with a second plurality set of images.

40.   (previously presented) The method according to Claim 16 wherein said image placeholder allows viewing of an area of interest in the background.